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TEST RUN

As an unapologetic, unwavering supporter of Los Angeles' public transit system, willing to defend Metro like it's my kid sister, I try my hardest to use my journalistic influence to lure car-strapped Angelenos onto buses and trains. But on **continued on page 8**



STIMULUS IMPACT ON ARCHITECTS STILL MODEST

IN FOR A PENNY

It wasn't long ago that the 82-unit Turk/Eddy project in San Francisco was just another affordable housing development with a moving target for a completion date due to a weak economy and limited financing. Now the Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation's two-building preservation scheme is scheduled to start construction in January, partly thanks to federal

dollars made available by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The project is a recipient of some of the more than \$576 million in federal stimulus funds being distributed by the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee to pump life into affordable housing projects across the state.

Paulett Taggart, principal of San Francisco-based Paulett Taggart **continued on page 7**

FANTASIA TECH
ARCHITECTURAL ANIMATION ENTERS A NEW CHAPTER OF SOPHISTICATED, HIGH-TECH STORYTELLING. SEE PAGES 12-13

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BATTLING OVER BROAD

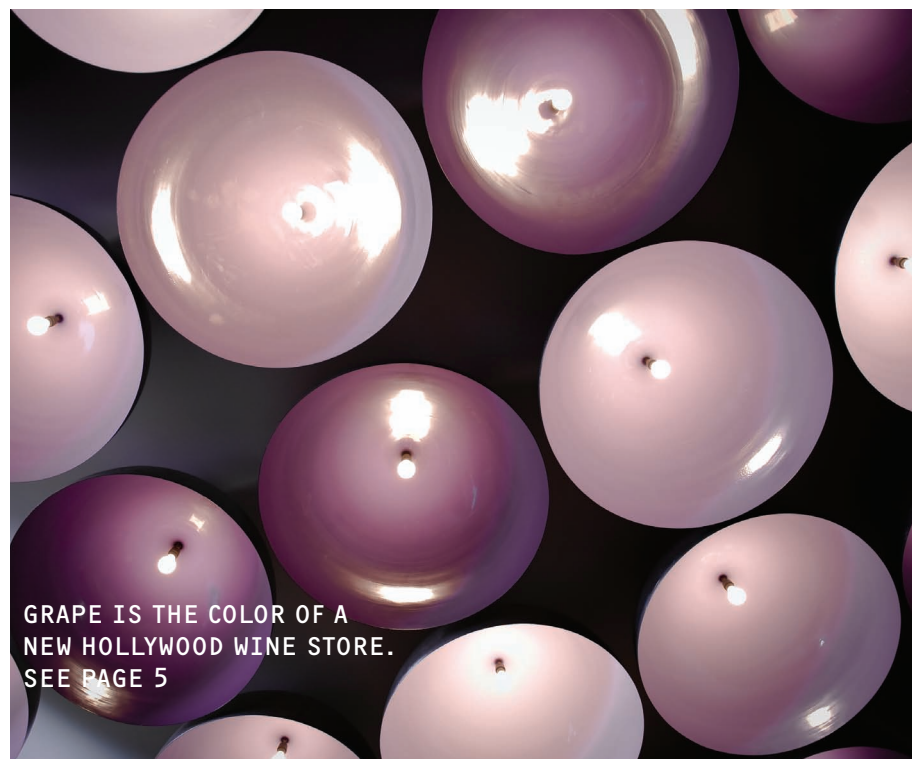
Just when many thought that Eli Broad's long-planned contemporary art museum in Beverly Hills was a goner, it appears to have risen from the dead, bringing new intrigue along with it.

On December 1, the Beverly Hills City Council approved plans to expand the draft environmental impact review (EIR) for the museum's proposed site—the three-parcel, commercial-and-retail Gateway project—to include the museum option, beginning its formal move forward with the **continued on page 3**

NEW PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MAY LANDMARK MEDIOCRITY

MIDCENTURY MADNESS?

San Francisco's cramped North Beach branch library, a relatively unheralded midcentury structure, has been on track to be replaced by a spacious new building by local firm Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects. But the plans may be derailed by the city's new Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The commission is initiating landmark status for the North Beach **continued on page 4**



PLANS SHELVED FOR BERKELEY ART MUSEUM

NO GO ITO

One of the most anticipated projects in the Bay Area, the new home for the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archives, has succumbed to the economic downturn. The new structure would have been the U.S. debut of Toyo Ito, the Japanese architect known for his highly conceptual work. But citing shortfalls in fundraising—with only \$81 million of the estimated \$200 million needed—UC Berkeley, which owns the museum, announced last month that it was returning to square one.

"I want to emphasize that our primary goal has not changed, we are going to have a museum on the new site," said Lawrence Rinder, the museum's director. "Moving forward, I'm optimistic that we will have an aesthetically remarkable structure, something **continued on page 5**



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A FEW GOOD IDEAS

At last fall's Monterey Design Conference, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill partner Craig Hartman, who has years of experience practicing in China, talked about the differences between working there and working in San Francisco. Over the span of two years in San Francisco, he said, his firm went through 170 public meetings on just one project—the Parkmerced redevelopment—and was just barely able to secure entitlements. In the same time frame in China, much of Guangzhou was built, including key parts of its central business district and 30 miles of subway. The comparison will surely resonate with architects across California and beyond.

So the question arises: How can the United States and California in particular remain competitive, creating necessary and even visionary architecture and infrastructure in an age when its major competition doesn't have the burdens of planning review, community meetings, and environmental standards?

Obviously, it won't work to become a totalitarian state where people and buildings can be displaced on a whim and the government controls all deals. Nor should we rush to develop as much as humanly possible. After all, just a month or so after the Monterey conference, the economy of one of the world's other lightning-speed builders, Dubai, was submerged in a sea of debt brought on by overdevelopment and speculation.

But as we emerge from our own economic debacle and begin to build again, it's time to think about streamlining the system. Certainly, we need to reform environmental review processes, like California's Environmental Quality Act, which has sometimes become a political tool to block projects regardless of their environmental effects, such as when Westfield sued to challenge EIR approval of a new neighboring (and competing) mall, the Shops at Santa Anita in Arcadia.

Hartman shared his own ideas on how to speed up the process, by making planning rules clearer and more binding, and removing the lengthy negotiations that occur on large-scale projects. Such politically charged give-and-take between planning departments, local leaders, and neighborhood groups inevitably, he said, slows down the process, makes it much murkier, and too often leads to watered-down designs.

I agree with Hartman. Input from neighbors and officials is vital, but in addition to focusing on a local level, it should be used to help create a more general template of regulation for development, rather than sticking to a case-by-case scenario that can make any project take years.

I reached out to other local architects and planners and heard plenty of incisive ideas. My favorites include the following: Simplify the permit process to make it concise and transparent, not something that only those with training in bureaucracy-speak can understand. Limit the stringent and onerous parking requirements that all projects seem to have in California—we're moving out of an age of car-dominance, and our approach to urbanism needs to reflect that. Finally, ensure that applicants submit plans that are complete and don't have to be sent back for re-shaping over and over again.

I'd like to hear more, and would encourage you to post your ideas on our new Facebook page. We'll be leveraging social networking as a way to broaden the conversation about this and other challenges facing our cities and our architecture. **SAM LUBELL**

BATTLING OVER BROAD continued from front page Broad scheme. But in a new twist, Broad is now speaking with the city of Santa Monica about his project potentially ending up there, pitting the two cities against one another in a battle for Broad's affections.

The Broad Art Foundation's original scheme, set for two of the three parcels on the Gateway—a project first proposed in 2007, and located on a thin sliver of land near the corner of Wilshire and Santa Monica boulevards—was sent to Beverly Hills last fall. The foundation finally followed up with schematics sent to the city on August 15. Its newest proposal, delivered on October 12 and developed with help from Gensler, includes 43,365 square feet of gallery space, a reduction of office space from about 100,000 square feet to about 40,000 square feet, and plans for a 6,100-square-foot rooftop sculpture garden and a 9,755-square-foot outdoor public plaza at the east end of the site.

The city's expanded EIR, to be undertaken by environmental consulting firm Rincon Consultants, would cost Beverly Hills an estimated \$105,000 to undertake, an expenditure that in itself is a clear sign of the city's dedication to the project. "The city is certainly very interested in a public art museum of this caliber and prestige," said spokesperson Cheryl Burnett. "Obviously, we need to assess the impacts, but it would be an exciting addition to a city that is already an internationally recognized destination."

If built, the museum would become the permanent home for the Broad Collections, which contain over 2,000 artworks, most of them contemporary. The building would also house a research and study center, as well as the foundation's administrative headquarters. The foundation currently uses a renovated 1927 building in Santa Monica, housing offices and a gallery, which is only open by reservation and too small for the sorts of exhibitions Broad has said he would like to host. The shortlist of architects participating in a competition to design the project includes Thom Mayne, Jean Nouvel, Shigeru Ban, Rafael Viñoly, and Christian de Portzamparc. Some rumors have Mayne leading the field.

But while the project was forging ahead in Beverly Hills, other plans were brewing in Santa Monica. At its November 17 city council meeting, the council approved negotiations with the Broad Art Foundation to build the project on a 2.5-acre parcel of land facing Main Street between the Santa Monica Courthouse and Civic Auditorium. According to *The Santa Monica Daily Press*, city officials first met with Broad to discuss the possibility more than two months ago, and the foundation submitted plans for the project in October. Under the proposal, which would entail amending Santa Monica's Civic Center Specific Plan, the foundation would build and operate the museum, with the city's costs limited to about \$7 million, according to the city manager. Santa Monica committed to expediting the museum's approval process while still "preserving full public review."

Beverly Hills' Burnett said that Santa Monica's moves had not influenced plans to go ahead with the museum EIR. Meanwhile, rumors have swirled that Broad is considering a third site within Los Angeles itself, but thus far no third site has been made public. The Broad Foundation could not be reached for comment. **SL**

LETTERS

ALL ACCOUNTED

I was dismayed to read "Your Pink Slips Are Showing" (CAN 08_10.28.2009) in the Eavesdrop gossip column. Written in reference to Perkins+Will's acquisition of SMWM last year, the story is not factual and draws incorrect conclusions.

The San Francisco office of Perkins+Will did have a layoff in September. This was a direct consequence of the current economic crisis. Perkins+Will is experiencing the same pressures to sustain our workload that all architecture firms are facing in this severe recession, and in fact we have managed to last far longer without a layoff

than most large practices.

For the record, some of the people laid off were former SMWM employees, but the number stated [25] is incorrect and highly overstated. SMWM is the third successful acquisition that Perkins+Will has made to build a strong San Francisco design practice and has indeed proven to be a good idea.

RUSSELL DRINKER
MANAGING DIRECTOR
PERKINS+WILL
SAN FRANCISCO

CORRECTIONS

Our conversation with longtime San Francisco bookseller William Stout (CAN 09_11.23.2009) omitted the name of the interviewer. The Q&A was conducted by frequent AN contributor Kenneth Caldwell.

An "Unveiled" item about Cuninghame Group Architecture's Hayden office building in Culver City (CAN 09_11.23.2009) stated that the project's windows were shaded from direct sunlight on the north and east sides of the building. In fact, direct sunlight is shaded on the south and east sides of the facade, not north.

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER DECEMBER 16, 2009

Twelve West's light-filled interior (left); bSIDE6 features a black steel frame that wraps around a skin of glass (center). Ziba's metallic and glass box is surrounded by timber-clad elements (right).



LEFT: COURTESY ZGF; CENTER AND RIGHT: STEPHEN A. MILLER

NEW OFFICES BURNISH PORTLAND'S REP FOR MORE THAN SUSTAINABILITY

GOOD WORKING NEIGHBORS

Portland is often called the greenest city in America, its new architecture included. Now three daring new office buildings—Twelve West by Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Architects

(ZGF), Ziba headquarters by Holst Architecture, and bSIDE6 by Works Partnership Architecture—have brought this local ethos to commercial construction, a function of the

city's increasing popularity with creative workers.

Each of the buildings boasts a long list of sustainable checkpoints, and they're all in the process of applying for a rating of LEED Gold or higher. The 23-story Twelve West boasts hot-water-heating solar panels, a ceiling-integrated chilled water cooling system, and a storm water retention system that diverts more than half a million gallons of runoff to watering the landscaping and flushing the toilets. Four building-integrated wind turbines generate electricity on site, and planted terraces covering half of the roof increase insulation values. The result is a mixed-use building that uses 40 percent less energy than comparable structures. The ground floor will be dedicated to retail, ZGF will occupy the four floors above, and the remainder will be given to 277 apartments.

Nearby sits Ziba, a clean black box floating on a ground-story plinth of cumaru wood. Steel panel siding is placed in a chevron pattern, giving an otherwise simple building a textural overlay and refracting sunshine subtly off the panel's angles. Inside, the building

is similarly unadorned. "It's not a gilded building; there aren't any extraneous materials," said architect Cassidy Bolger of Holst. Ninety-five percent of post-construction waste was recycled.

Across the river, the sleek seven-story bSIDE6 features ribbons of black steel that wrap around a skin of glass. The architects' green goals centered on using as few materials as possible in construction. The frame is concrete, chosen because of its durability and ready availability, as well as its thermal mass. Rainwater is entirely handled on site, directed into pipes and gravel under the foundation. Inside, there are few finishes. The ductwork, electrical wiring, and pipes are exposed, and the only drywall appears in a scant few panels that act as office dividers and define the nine window bays that project out from the building.

What's perhaps most notable about these buildings is their broader definition of sustainability. "In Portland, sustainability is more than a prescriptive checklist," said Scott Lewis, CEO of sustainable consulting firm Brightworks. "It's about a holistic approach to building

that includes a social component." Rather than the traditional hierarchical layout of private offices and cube farms, "a lot of people in Portland want to work in more of an experimental, open, non-cube environment," explained Bolger. At Ziba, for example, a design company that creates products both for Microsoft and for Target, designers gather at long tables, interspersed with glassed-in meeting rooms, to reflect the collaborative nature of their work. An 86-foot-long wall of glass runs the length of the building, so all employees are bathed in natural light.

This broader view of sustainability extends to the siting of each building. Twelve West stands in Portland's West End, a somewhat neglected neighborhood of single-family housing, grocery stores, and small businesses. bSIDE6 is on lower Burnside, a rather gritty thoroughfare. Ziba occupies a former brown-field site. The architects of each building hope new construction can invigorate what are otherwise slowly developing neighborhoods, a sustainable goal that reaches far beyond your basic accumulation of LEED points. **AMARA HOLSTEIN**

The North Beach Branch Library, as it stands today.



COURTESY OF THE SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY

MIDCENTURY MADNESS? continued from front page branch, along with several other libraries designed in the 1950s and '60s by defunct firm Appleton & Wolfard.

The action may portend greater architectural conservatism in a city already known for its impediments to new building. If the libraries get the stamp, it will set a precedent in the city for landmarking a noncontiguous group of buildings, adding a "discontinuous historic district"

to the existing categories of historic and conservation districts. In such a multiple-property listing, a whole group is under consideration: Individual buildings do not have to rise to the level of landmark-worthiness.

Preservationists argue that Appleton & Wolfard's low-slung buildings are important socially as well as architecturally. They were part of the city's second wave of public libraries, following the

Carnegie libraries of the early 1900s (many of which have been landmarked). Designed along a residential rather than institutional model, the libraries have open reading rooms, large plate-glass windows, and outdoor patios. "This group of libraries is a very good example of civic buildings of this period, and embody certain modern ideals, with a connection to the outdoors and a sense of transparency," said architect Andrew Wolfram, one of seven HPC commissioners. "It's a set of buildings that are unlike any other buildings in the city." Consultants contracted by the city to perform a historical resources evaluation found that the North Beach branch "appears to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places."

But others in the architecture community are puzzled by the choice to elevate a body of seemingly minor works. "Appleton & Wolfard are not key names in the history of midcentury architecture in San

Francisco, and this particular building has no architectural merit," said Pierluigi Serraino, author of *NorCalMod*, who was commissioned by local residents to research the issue. Architectural historian Mitchell Schwarzer commented, "It's a nice little building, but architecturally it doesn't cry out for landmarking. On the other hand, there are a lot of great modernist buildings that are not on the landmark list, so there's a kind of asymmetry here. Many of them are starting to hit that critical 50-year mark, so the remedy would be to make an effort to landmark the really important ones."

The landmark initiative comes toward the end of a major library capital improvement effort, funded by a \$106 million bond issue in 2000. The eight Appleton & Wolfard libraries were originally slated for renovation. According to city library staff, it quickly became apparent that remodeling the North Beach and Ortega branches would be impractical when the neighborhoods

in question needed much larger spaces. Plans for new buildings were drawn up for both branches. After review by the planning department, which deemed it not a significant historical resource, the Ortega Branch was demolished this past September. The demolition drew the attention of the HPC, which decided to hold off on landmarking two other Appleton & Wolfard branches currently undergoing renovation, but to include North Beach.

HPC will weigh in on more buildings going forward, as new historic districts from the city's neighborhoods survey—including SoMa, the Mission, Market/Octavia, and Bayview—come online. "If this collection of libraries becomes landmarks, one wonders what the selection criteria will be for determining a landmark," said Marsha Maytum of Leddy Maytum Stacy. "It has ramifications for how we can evolve as a city and address challenges in the future."

LYDIA LEE

HITCHIN' A RIDE

With its price hikes, worker strife, and bureaucratic image, LA Metro doesn't exactly set the standard for good press. But that appears to be changing as the transit authority has hired two of our favorite writers to supply in-house news and consulting. After being laid off by *The Los Angeles Times* in March, transit reporter **Steve Hymon** was hired by Metro to put together its new transit blog, *The Source*. On November 20, *AN* contributor **Sam Hall Kaplan** announced that he had been hired by Metro to be a transportation planning manager, with a focus on "crafting a user-friendly interface in Downtown LA between the Metro and the proposed California High Speed Rail," in particular for stations and streetscapes. Eavesdrop hopes there's one more spot for a guy who would like to check out the coolest cities and their metro systems for ideas—say Paris, Rome, Berlin, and Tokyo.

AVE ATQUE VALETS!

Bad blood is stirring between the William Morris Endeavor talent agency and developers George Comfort & Sons, as the agency tries to extract itself from a lease at a building now under construction at 231-265 North Beverly Drive in Beverly Hills. Earlier this fall, WME contended that Comfort & Sons had violated the lease, because the agency would be forced to share a valet service and parking with a competitor (God forbid!) in a neighboring building. Prior to William Morris' mega-merger with Endeavor, the agency had hired Gensler to design the interiors for 231. Enter **Ari Emanuel**, then head of Endeavor, who now runs the WME shop—where egos in excess outstrip even the most brazen architect. The agent fired Gensler and hired **Neil Denari**. Then came word that Emanuel was trying to leave the Beverly Drive address entirely. Now, no one is talking at least not to us. Or is it Eavesdrop's Corvair? Gensler declined to comment, while Denari's firm tells us they're still on hold. As for the valets, we hear they're deeply offended. Naturally.

WHY TV APPEARANCES MATTER

Why take ourselves seriously as architecture critics when we can be lampooned on *The Colbert Report* in order to sell a few books? Whoops, that's not Eavesdrop's game. That's *New Yorker* critic **Paul Goldberg**, who sat gamely grinning in the hot seat on November 19 while Colbert ridiculed—uh, make that—discussed world architecture and Goldberg's new book, *Why Architecture Matters*. After a rocky start (Colbert mis-pronounced Goldberg's name in the intro), Colbert proceeded to grill the author on the possibility of landmarking the Colbert Report set. Then, he suggested putting a toilet handle on the Guggenheim, and asked if he could skateboard down the Gugg's ramp (Why not? Krens would have—might have—motorbiked it if he had the chance). Finally, Colbert pondered aloud that if architecture reflects who we are, as Goldberg's book claims, then how come our houses aren't getting fatter? Goldberg took it all in stride, relishing the rare chance among architecture authors to bathe in the brighter lights of TV-bound public attention. Fair warning, though: Eavesdrop's aiming to get on Oprah with an architecture Tell-All.

SEND METRO PASSES AND TELEPROMPTERS TO EAVESDROP@ARCHPAPER.COM



COURTESY GOOGLE EARTH

NO GO ITO continued from front page that the architectural community will be happy with."

However, the Ito design, which promised to be a technical and aesthetic breakthrough, is no longer an option. The honeycomb-like structure was projected to have gossamer-thin walls made of steel thinly layered with concrete, eliminating the need for separate structural framing. Located right by the campus' West Gate—

the main entrance—the building would have been a highly visible addition.

The museum is currently looking at what it could build for the \$81 million it has in hand, which includes a \$20 million commitment from the university, and whether it could possibly raise more money. "The tragic twist to the story is that we were able to raise \$25 million over the past year in the worst economic climate," said Rinder. "But we looked

at the gap and where we were going, and it was just too much."

Back in 2006, the museum chose Ito from a shortlist, but did not hold a design competition. Rinder has not ruled out the possibility of working with Ito on an alternative design. Another option is to rehabilitate the old printing plant on the site, a 20,000-square-foot warehouse whose spacious interior, illuminated by three immense skylights, holds promise as a gallery. With an addition, it could get closer to the original plan of 140,000 square feet. The museum expects to announce its new plan by the end of the year.

The museum's current home, a 1970 Brutalist concrete building designed by Mario Ciampi, has seismic problems that make it prohibitively expensive to retrofit for long-term use.

LL



> **DOMAINE LA**
6801 Melrose Avenue
Los Angeles
Tel: 323-932-0280
Architect:
Della Valle Bernheimer

BRIAN POPE

Domaine, a startling new wine store in Hollywood owned by former filmmaker Jill Bernheimer (sister to one of the architects, Andrew Bernheimer), began its life as an online wine seller called domaine547.com. This fall, it entered the real world. The 2,000-square-foot space on Melrose Avenue is highlighted by a field of 48 ceiling-mounted aluminum light shades. The hemisphere-shaped shades are 36 inches in diameter and painted in three different shades of glossy purple. Their color and shape both abstractly reference wine grapes. They occupy the center space of the store, marking an area for reading about, discussing, or tasting wine. The wine selection itself is displayed in custom walnut racks and trays that ring the perimeter of the store. A dark chalkboard strip, playfully known as the "wall of affordable deliciousness," wraps the retail floor above the wall racks, allowing Bernheimer to note special selections. **SL**

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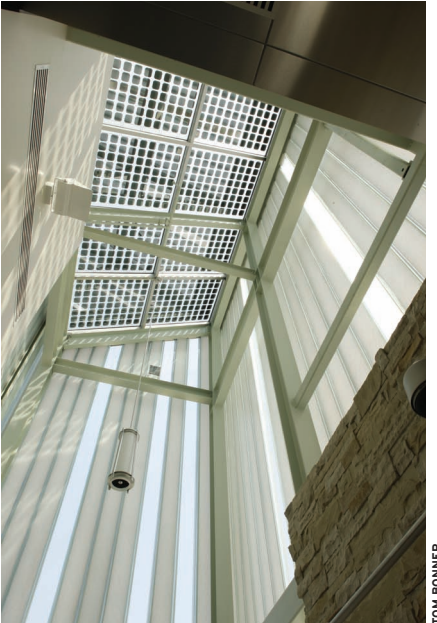
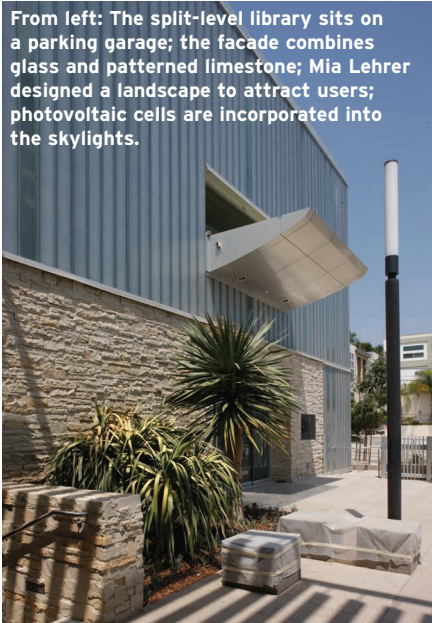
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Tacchini

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From left: The split-level library sits on a parking garage; the facade combines glass and patterned limestone; Mia Lehrer designed a landscape to attract users; photovoltaic cells are incorporated into the skylights.



TOM BONNER

THE LIBRARY NEXT DOOR

The Los Angeles Library Bond Construction Plan is a rare success story for the city's often-troubled public programs. Launched through a \$178.3 million bond measure passed in 1998, the plan has brought about 36 solid, sometimes even artful buildings from talented architects like Hodgetts & Fung, Stephen Ehrlich, and Barton Phelps. And somehow the program has remained on budget and on time—a modern-day miracle.

The last of these projects is emblematic. M2A Architects' Silver Lake Library on the corner of Glendale and Silver Lake boulevards was not completed on a huge budget (\$12 million) or at a huge scale (13,600 square feet). But it delivers serious architectural impact, nonetheless. And it has given the neighborhood an unmistakable symbol, encouraging more people to explore

an impressive library collection while potentially pushing the city toward more ambitious architecture.

To approach the split-level library, which sits on a raised base above a ground-level parking structure, one progresses through a concrete-floored courtyard designed by landscape architect Mia Lehrer. It's inviting, with flora on the periphery, benches shaped like stacks of books, and charming artwork by Silver Lake local Christina Ulke. The only jarring part is an awkward security gate. Still, compared to some of the Berlin Wall-sized gates the city puts up around its public buildings, this is a picket fence.

The L-shaped building's facade features a textured combination of thin vertical panels of clear and channel glass and patterned limestone. The glass composition is subtle but lively and rhythmi-

cal, while the stone keeps the rectilinear project from feeling too institutional. The architects have chosen strategic moments to wow, most importantly the 35-foot-tall corner window that reveals the main reading room. It invites people inside, giving them a clear view of the library's inner workings. "We took every chance we could to connect the inside with the outside," said M2A principal Barry Malofsky. The library's connectivity and its embrace of the neighborhood is a direct nod to former Silver Lake resident Richard Neutra and his indoor/outdoor aesthetic. In fact the library sits next to one of Neutra's office buildings and just down the street from several of his most famous houses on the Silver Lake Reservoir.

Inside the cavernous entrance hall, one feels an immediate sense of lightness, brought on

by 30-foot-plus ceiling heights, ubiquitous windows and skylights, and a constant connection to the outside—including cleverly-framed views of nearby tree-tops—that makes everything seem even larger. The outside is brought inside here with dark stone tile floors picking up on the exterior, and glass gardens made of colorful shards that mimic flowing water near the corners. The useful if unspectacular multipurpose room across from the entrance hall, lit from above by clerestories, accommodates lectures, seminars, and community meetings.

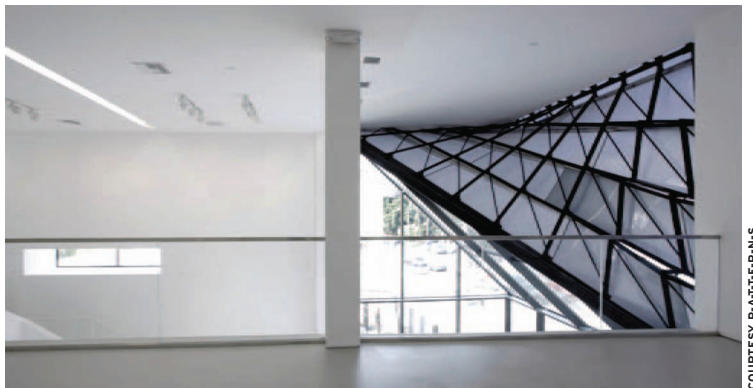
The main event, atop the narrow, light-infused stairway, is the giant reading room, which feels as if it is perched over Glendale Boulevard thanks to its street-front siting and massive corner window. The rest of the library interior is not exactly edgy, but

it feels comfortable and uncluttered. Its unified plan subtly separates various uses—the library stacks, a children's room, teen area, multimedia center—through changing ceiling heights, small canopies, and varied furniture configurations.

The building is seeking a LEED Gold rating, and includes 168 solar panels on the roof, low-flow plumbing, rapidly renewable woods, recycled and local construction materials, substantial daylighting, automatic light sensors, and more.

The library isn't an icon that will redefine Los Angeles, but that's the point. It's architecture that impresses but also fits well into its setting. A sleek, artful, and entirely contemporary building couldn't be more at home than in a creative place like Silver Lake. With buildings such as these, the city will become what it was always supposed to be: a collection of distinct neighborhoods that together make up a dynamic whole. **SL**

BOULEVARD GALLERY



COURTESY P-A-T-T-E-R-N-S

A striking new three-story project on the Sunset Strip in West Hollywood designed by Marcelo Spina and his firm P-A-T-T-E-R-N-S opened in mid-November. Originally conceived as a boutique, the space is now a contemporary art gallery called Prism. Its facade is composed of lapped and undulating resin-based polycarbonate panels that mimic Sunset Boulevard's twisting traffic patterns, its hilly curves, and even the radiators of its whizzing cars. Shifting fins angle in various directions, eventually leading the eye toward the gallery's large glass vitrine and entry "like a tractor beam," said Spina. Inside, large angular stairs offset pristine white spaces with varied heights and dramatic strips of lighting. The entry's curves are reflected in a swooping interior overhang. The gallery will feature an always-changing array of national and international artists, a bookshop, and a lecture and film schedule.

IN FOR A PENNY continued from front page Architects, is the architect of Turk/Eddy. The eight-person firm has a second stimulus project on its books: two blocks of the Hunters View revitalization project that was awarded \$6 million in U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ARRA funds through the San Francisco Housing Authority. The project, whose master architect is WRT/Solomon E.T.C., will start on abatement and demolition this month. "We're lucky right now," Taggart said. "I'm talking to other architects who are not so lucky."

Taggart might be right to chalk up her firm's stimulus success to luck. Though California leads the nation in ARRA funds—as of November 22, \$18.5 billion had been awarded to, and more than \$8 billion received by, the Golden State—the impact on architectural billings has been modest. National Architecture Billings Index data released by the American Institute of Architects in August found 15.7 percent of ABI panelists reported receiving billable work from the stimulus plan. Twenty-four percent reported having inquiries for future projects from stimulus funds.

Riccardo Mascia, managing principal of the Los Angeles office of HOK, said that although the firm is assisting a couple of clients with

stimulus-project pursuits, it is not actively tracking ARRA work. "In most cases, it's brought up by our clients," Mascia said. "It's not like we said, 'The government is going to dump a lot of money into public housing, for example, so let's chase that.'" He concluded, "We focus on the things we know how to do and know how to do well."

For those interested in stimulus work, tracking ARRA projects requires navigating a complex network of federal and state websites listing contract and grants opportunities. Because ARRA provides state and local governments with several new financing mechanisms, including new categories of tax-exempt and tax-credit bonds, communication with local municipalities is key. It also may necessitate a willingness to be flexible about the project type and delivery method. Another AIA finding showed that stimulus projects are more likely to include renovations/rehabilitations of existing facilities and to have design/build requirements.

Still, for those with the inclination and means to track it, the stimulus can be a prime business development opportunity, as well as another way to serve existing clients. William Tippin in the Government Services Group at AECOM said his firm has taken

a proactive approach to ARRA projects, focusing on stimulus work available through the General Services Administration. "We looked at the ARRA budget and broke it down by agency, focus area, and client," he said. "There was an effort on our part to establish a program management office in the U.S. and abroad to be prepared to respond to opportunities."

Margaret Campbell, a project manager with the John Stewart Co., which is part of the Hunters View Community Partners development team, said even when architects aren't the prime player in a stimulus fund application, they have opportunities to assist in the pursuit.

"Some stimulus funds include a green component, particularly competitive grants. In these cases, we've coordinated with architects to figure out what we could commit to," Campbell said. "For example, when we did our storm water provisions, we did assessments to see what we could feasibly incorporate without backtracking on the project. We had to be creative."

In total, the state estimates that ARRA will provide \$85 billion in benefit to California. More than \$30 billion of that amount is designated for tax-relief initiatives, including several that could spur design and construction projects. For example,

The WRT/Solomon E.T.C.-designed Block 4 at Hunters View.



ZENDARSKI STUDIOS

ARRA authorized \$10 billion in Recovery Zone economic development bonds and \$15 billion in Recovery Zone facility bonds that can be issued in 2009 and 2010. According to the state's economic recovery portal, California housing initiatives, transportation, and energy are designated at an estimated \$2.1 billion, \$4.7 billion, and \$3 billion respectively.

In addition to increased billings, it was hoped that the stimulus would stave off rising unemployment. But despite leading the nation in created/saved jobs, California also boasts one of the country's highest unemployment rates at 12.5 percent.

Still, architects hoping to land stimulus-funded projects can take comfort from a report on California's recovery website that stresses the majority of the money designated for federal stimulus projects is still available and will be distributed over the next two years. Likewise, an analysis done by the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation as part of its July 2009 Economic Forecast concluded that federal stimulus dollars will have a relatively small impact on California by 2009, but statewide public works construction activity is expected to improve in 2010 and 2011.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER DECEMBER 16, 2009

Clockwise from top left: Atlantic station, East LA Civic Center station, Pico/Aliso station, Maravilla station



COURTESY BARRIO PLANNERS

TEST RUN continued from front page

November 15, as Metro's Gold Line Eastside extension rolled out of downtown's Union Station and into East Los Angeles, heralded by 50,000 fans, thousands of blog posts, and at least a hundred mariachis, I felt for once that the city's enthusiasm seemed to match—and possibly exceed—my zealotry.

The latest segment in LA's nascent Metro system is the shortest (six miles) and expects the lowest ridership (only 13,000 a day, compared to over 100,000 on the Red Line), but it's clearly the most important thing to happen to the city's transit system thus far. Where Los Angeles transit discussions have mostly revolved around NIMBYs howling about the possibility that lower-income populations would overrun their neighborhoods, the Gold Line flips the paradigm. If public transit is urban democracy, the great leveler, then these eight shiny stations parading east into a traditional Mexican community seem to grant instant permission to curious Westsiders who want to explore its streets.

I rode with the line's lead architect Frank Villalobos on a preview a week before the opening. Pointing out various burrito and taco restaurants to the passengers on board, he agreed that neighborhood exposure was the single most important factor of the line. "People will not think of East Los Angeles as the violent, scary place they've heard about,"

he said proudly. "They will see it's a nice place." If his commentary was personal, verging on emotional, it was well founded. His firm Barrio Planners, which is located in East LA, is uniquely intertwined with the project. They not only served as lead architects with AECOM, but also performed some of the earliest community outreach to bring a subway to the area two decades ago, and designed Boyle Heights' Mariachi Plaza, which the line passes beneath, as well as several of the transit-oriented development projects along the way. Barrio also selected a roster of designers who paired with artists to work together on each station, choosing a theme that nods to each neighborhood.

East LA was denied its proposed extension of the Red Line subway, which runs from downtown to North Hollywood, thanks to anti-subway sentiment in the 1990s perpetuated by city legislators. A prompt by then-Mayor Richard Riordan briefly resurrected the idea as a busway. But when it was determined that a busway over LA's historic bridges and narrow streets would require as much infrastructural development as a light rail line, the planners invented an alternative: a light rail-subway hybrid capable of traveling on former right-of-ways from streetcars, and below-grade or underground when required. The challenge then became to sell what was considered to be a "second-best" alternative

for the marginalized community, said Metro planner James Rojas. "We had to convince the community that light rail was just as good," he said.

A ride on the Gold Line is one of the most dramatic routes in the city. New, silver bullet-like trains head south out of Union Station over a newly-constructed S-bridge built above the 101 freeway, with sweeping views of downtown. After stopping in Little Tokyo, the train snakes over the LA River on the 1st Street Bridge into Boyle Heights, where it makes one stop before slipping underground to two of the best stations: Mariachi Plaza and Soto (both designed by Barrio). Mariachi Plaza is successful because the space itself was designed as a subway station when Barrio created the plaza in 1993 (a renovation was completed last year). The ascents from both underground stations are crowned with elements from traditional Mexican dress: for Mariachi Plaza, colors evoking the bright embroidery worn by mariachi and canopy cables strung like *violines*, their instrument. At Soto, the twirling, multi-colored layers allude to the skirts of female dancers, while canopies are copper to resemble ornamental combs.

Resurfacing again, the train stops at one of the six above-ground stations, which all loosely follow the same basic structure, using steel-framed, tensile Teflon canopies

that peak and dip in different ways. The only above-ground station that bucks that trend is the exuberant East LA Civic Center. Here, the canopies explode into bright orange California poppies, a collaboration between Villalobos and artist Clement Hanami.

While the whimsical stations are said to nod to the neighborhoods, my fear while riding the Gold Line was that in the bid to make them representative of the local residents, so over-the-top ethnic, they've become stereotypical. The East LA stations do not need to be flashy. These are the city's most transit-dependent neighborhoods, and they don't need great design to encourage resident users. Instead, the stations have become—however misguided, in some cases—civic pride translated into the built environment: new, tourist-friendly landmarks for a community on the brink of reinventing itself that say, "Come see us now!"

Perhaps this is how we need to see our quickly expanding rail lines: as the city's new cultural corridors, convincing more than the transit-dependent to ride them. Perhaps a fluorescent orange steel poppy, or a tensile Teflon canopy that looks like the snow-capped peaks of the San Gabriel Mountains, are just the touches needed to entice more people to explore, embrace, and understand this under-appreciated part of LA. **ALISSA WALKER**



Schindler's How House (1925) restored. Original built-ins (right) were refabricated for the interior.

Preservationist Michael LaFetra is no stranger to the complexities that a midcentury fixer can pose. He is a serial rehabilitator and restorer, owning and selling over the past decade numerous iconic midcentury homes in LA, including Pierre Koenig's Case Study 21, John Lautner's Wolff House, and two more Case Study houses by A. Quincy Jones and Thornton Abell. But it's Rudolph Schindler's How House in Silver Lake, which he finished restoring

this fall, that presented his greatest challenge yet.

LaFetra bought the dilapidated house in early 2005 after the previous owner, UCLA professor Lionel March, retired and returned to his native England. With the help of Jeff Fink, a contractor and architect with experience on other Schindler homes, he began a massive restoration. "Tears welled up when I first walked into the space," LaFetra said.

The How House is sited

on a steep ridge and is angled to the street, necessitating a limited footprint.

Built in 1925 for psychotherapist Dr. James How, the house is essentially made of two discrete geometric parts using materials often associated with Schindler—concrete, redwood, and glass. The top portion is made of California redwood slats stained green-gray to complement the existing landscape, while the lower portion is "slab-cast" concrete. The concrete



the original as possible. When faced with the choice of replastering or doing a less-expensive skim coat, LaFetra chose to replaster. "The acoustics between the two are different," he explained. "Materials in a room play differently. It may not seem like a big deal, but I can tell the difference the same way some people can tell the difference in a grade of leather."

was horizontally scored to match the upper portions, and is only visible from the backside of the site.

The layout of the house is almost completely symmetrical. The interior consists of multiple, interlocking forms that meet in opposing right angles, with a continuous pattern of horizontal lines. The central volume is a cube, with smaller spaces extending from it. The house has four bedrooms, a dining room, and a sitting room, with offices downstairs. A Richard Neutra-designed garden from the original plans has finally been realized outside the kitchen terrace.

With LaFetra's extensive experience restoring mid-

century homes, he knew there would be unexpected complications, but he admits even he was surprised by the extent of the deterioration he faced. "You couldn't tell by looking at it what kind of shape the redwood cladding was in, since it was painted," he said. Stripping the wood uncovered extensive termite damage. There were also leaks on the deck. "We knew there was water intrusion, but didn't know why," LaFetra recalled. "When I bought the house, I didn't realize I would be rebuilding decks."

LaFetra has a strong sense of the architectural integrity of the homes he restores, working obsessively to ensure the materials he uses are as close to

Original furniture and built-ins were refabricated, with interior design by Kristin Kilmer. Using original drawings, Kilmer designed pieces that were built on the same mathematical module of 16 or 32 inches used by Schindler. Certain pieces were enlarged to signal they are derivative. "I don't want people to think I was trying to fool them. I wanted everyone to know what was original and what was Kristen's," said LaFetra.

The restoration took about two years. The How House was declared a Historic-Cultural Monument in 2007, and recently LaFetra put it back on the market after a brief hiatus.

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CENTRAL REGION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL #22



COURTESY OSBORN ARCHITECTS

If offered a half-empty glass of water, Osborn Architects would not only say it's half full, they'd make good use of what's left. That's because the Glendale firm thrives on creating within apparent limitations. Michael Pinto, design principal, credits former CEO and principal Ted Osborn, who always provided opportunities for his staff to shine: "Ted would throw smart people in over their heads. But he was a good teacher and showed them a certain amount of trust."

Since Osborn's retirement in 2006, Pinto and fellow principal Tim Ballard have carried on Osborn's management style, guiding their small firm through complex projects, ranging from their own 10,500-square-foot office in Glendale to

Ánimo Venice Charter High School, the first public school to receive California's High Performance Incentive Grant for sustainable features. Pinto says the challenges presented by budget or space limitations spur the firm's most creative problem-solving. "I like to get people to be more alert, to discover the resources that are available for design," Pinto said.

The firm offers construction management services on the process and costs of building. They've also integrated a landscape design arm, and a graphic design studio, Hand Built, which recently launched as an independent entity. Their blend of intellectual rigor and common sense has proven particularly useful for complicated

public and education projects, which are the bulk of their work.

The firm finds opportunities to make a campus identifiable and to help students see how they fit into their city or community. This may be through the subtlety of a design feature, significant investment in sustainability, a technically interesting assemblage of materials, or identifying graphics. Ultimately, Pinto notes, school architecture today is about building consensus and translating educational goals into shapes and volume. And with that much consideration behind the creation of a school building, what student wouldn't be inspired to learn?

ALLISON MILIONIS

SIERRA VISTA HIGH SCHOOL
MUSIC BUILDING
BALDWIN PARK

A tight budget and aggressive program that included optimized internal acoustics, minimized sound transmission, and increased classroom space drove the design of this building in LA's Baldwin Park. Each material had to support the project's acoustic program. Concrete masonry units were chosen for their mass properties, but also their cost-effectiveness; they provided structure and patterning, as well as a rugged finish that could withstand the abuse of teenagers. Cubic volume and room shape (especially the acoustical virtues of splayed, non-parallel walls), helped create sound isolation between rooms. The final design distinguishes the building—which opened last winter—among the other campus structures, serving as a marker for the arts.

PARADISE CANYON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MULTIPURPOSE ROOM
LA CAÑADA

The beauty of this modest structure, which opened in October 2009, is in the details. Located on an existing campus, the building is a theater, gymnasium, and meeting hall folded into one. Its position between the athletic field and public parking area—with access to the kitchen—makes it ideal for students during the day and public events in the evening. The low roofline and modular forms speak to the existing architecture, but here the panelized roof system folds over and around the entry for shelter while simultaneously hiding the mechanical equipment. A channel glass system reduces glare and washes the interior with an even, golden light.

ÁNIMO VENICE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL
VENICE

Ánimo Venice Charter High School is the first school to receive a grant from the High Performance Incentive Grant program, which earmarked \$100 million for "green" school projects funded by California Proposition 1D. The first phase of the urban campus opened in September 2009 and is a model of sustainable infrastructure and materials usage. The building's compact footprint is highlighted by a "paseo" for outdoor socializing, roof-mounted photovoltaics that power an efficient mechanical system, and drought-tolerant landscaping. More phases will follow, starting with a modular structure that will be used for an incoming class of ninth graders. Each incoming class thereafter will occupy a new modular building. When completed, Ánimo Venice will encompass 45,000 square feet, including a gymnasium/auditorium and a two-story building.

CENTRAL REGION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
#22
PLAYA VISTA

When completed in 2011, this Playa Vista school will be the Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) showpiece for sustainability and progressive math/science curriculum, as well as a teacher training ground for students at Loyola Marymount University. The project was especially challenging because of its small budget and copious site restraints. Classroom configurations are broken into parts, all spaces are useable, and every material provided an opportunity to create something of aesthetic or functional value, preferably both. "We wanted to connect kids to architecture," said Pinto. The school represents an update on the LAUSD model, by integrating sustainable mechanical systems, recycled water, usable landscapes including an edible garden, passive campus security, reactive energy management systems, and onsite energy generation. The firm expects the school to earn LEED Gold certification—one of the first in LAUSD's stable to achieve accreditation from the USGBC.

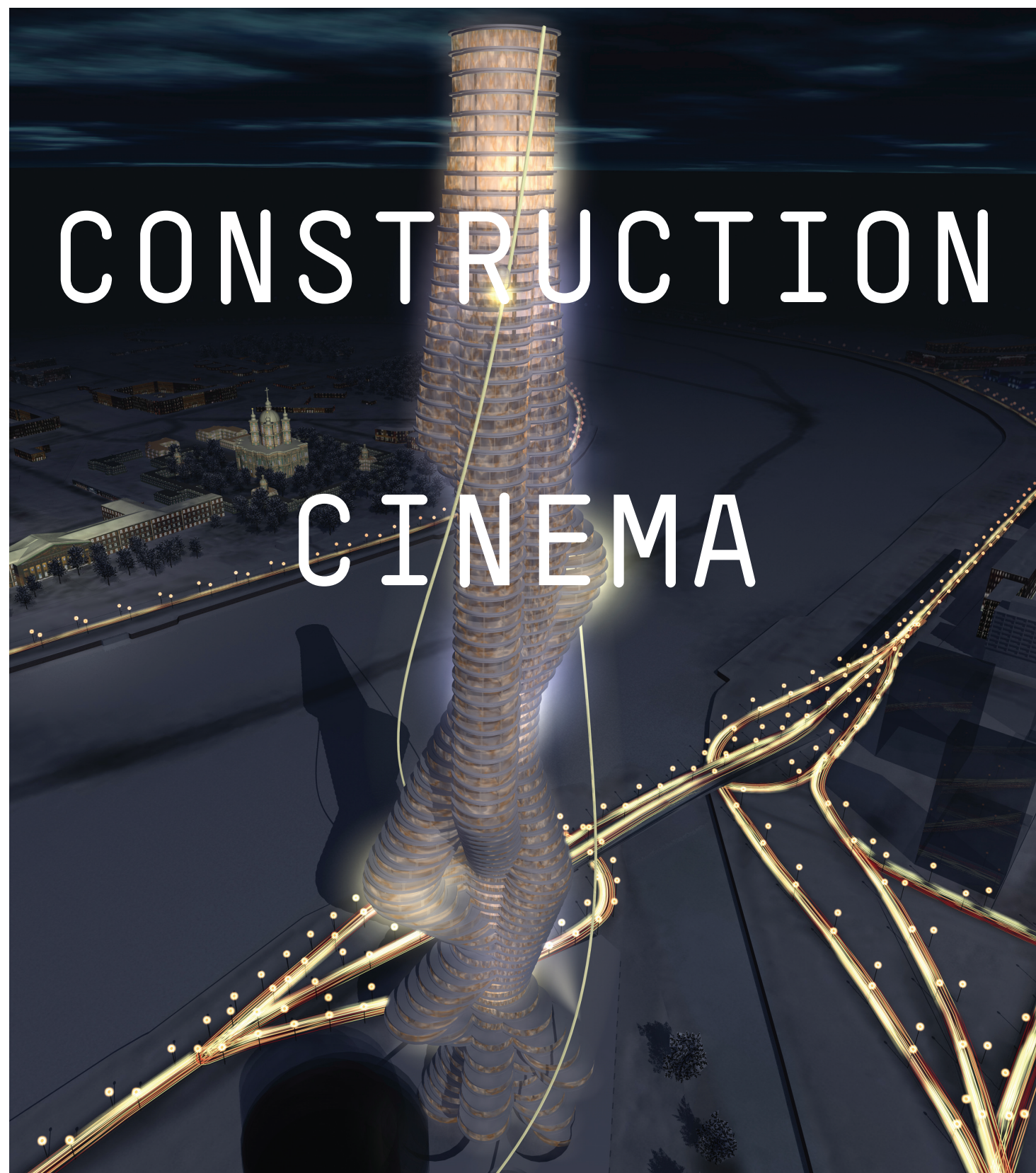
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COURTESY NEUTRAL

Once bare-bones and utilitarian, architectural animation is becoming more nuanced and experiential. In part, this development can be credited to advances in 3-D technology, but at the same time architects have embraced the art of filmmaking—not only to create more interactive presentations for clients, but also to leverage as a tool in the design process.

It's easy to think of architecture as an interdisciplinary field. At its most basic level, art and science combine to create buildings that are both beautiful and functional. In much the same way, architects are now relying on a broad spectrum of professional fields for sharing their work. From film to video games to documentary photography, architects are stretching beyond their own circles to present and explain their projects in new and even entertaining ways.

Some of the biggest leaps have occurred within the realm of architectural animation. With the rapid expansion of computer rendering and 3-D modeling software,

converting models into animations has become exponentially easier and an increasingly popular way to present new projects.

Amid Amidi, an animation historian and co-creator of the animation blog Cartoon Brew, said that in recent years he's been seeing much higher levels of complexity in architectural presentations, and much more artistry in the process. "You can illustrate not just the idea, but show how people are going to interact with that environment in a way that can't be shown with a little man in a model," he said. "You can actually demonstrate interactions between user and environment. We're only on the verge of what can be done."

Architectural drawings have been given the animation treatment for years, but most fall into a utilitarian mold: a 360-degree rotation around a model of the building and a "flythrough" that takes the viewer inside. The result is a compelling visual for the client, but ultimately it's a plain-cake approach.

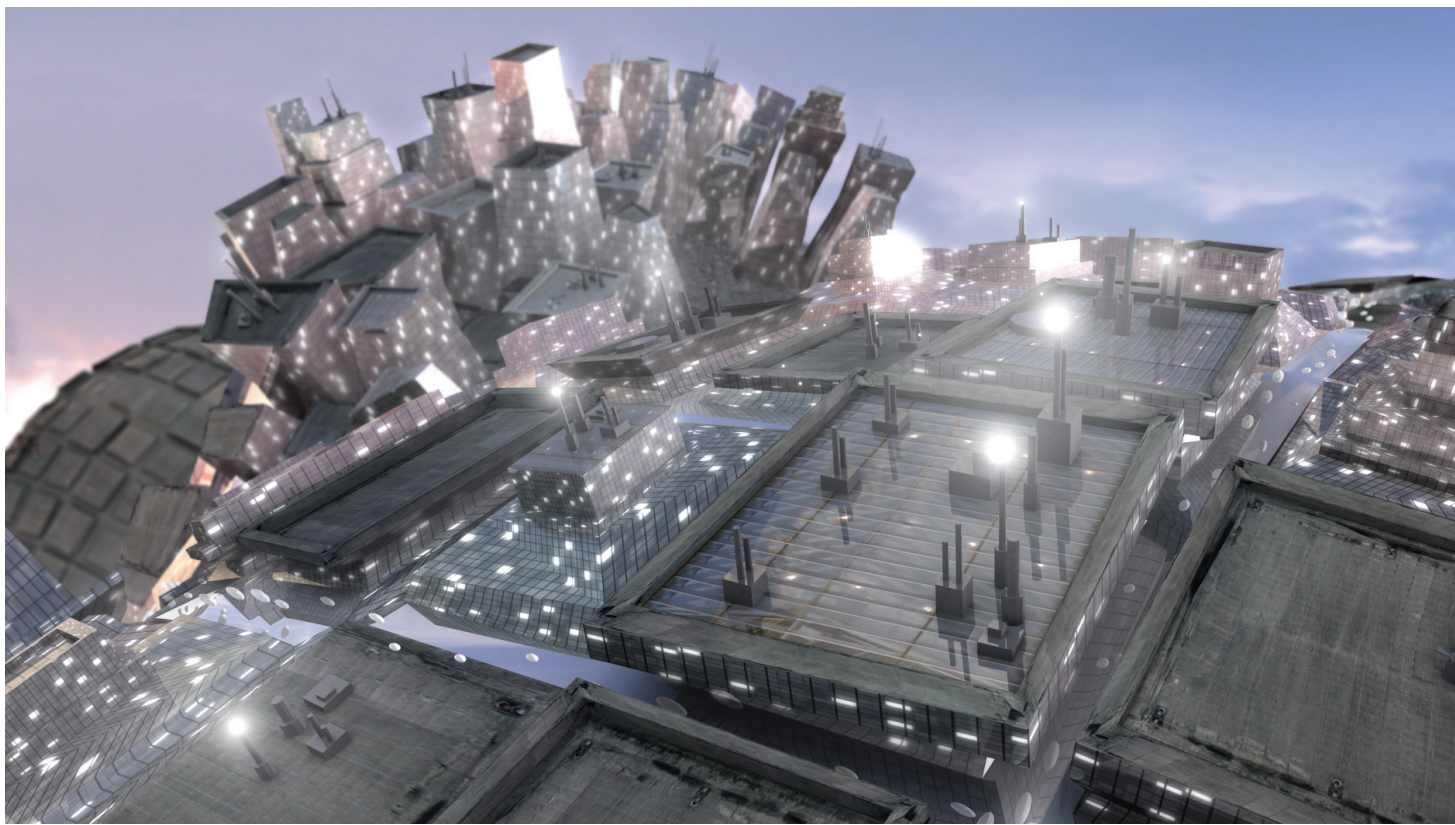
"It has become completely mainstream now," said Tapio Snellman, a director at Neutral, the London-based design and animation studio behind a string of films for such clients as Zaha Hadid, OMA, and Herzog & de Meuron. Neutral's films tend to be impressionistic in approach, as opposed to what Snellman bemoans as the typical "hyper-realistic" film. "All they do is show the reality and the way the building's going to be as close as possible without really talking much about the process or explaining why it is the way it is or how the design evolved," he said.

That's a sentiment that has invaded the field, both among filmmakers and architects. "People have become really anesthetized to architectural visualizations," said Vivian Rosenthal, co-founder of New York-based Tronic Studio, which produces a variety of visual displays for architects, including animations. Because she and co-founder Jesse Seppi were trained as architects, not filmmakers, they say they offer a fresh approach and perspective to architectural filmmaking. They use their understanding of the field's scientific and artistic interplay to break away from the standard video model. "The client and the public expect more from these kinds of architectural films," said Seppi.

Their recent film for a now-stalled Manhattan residential tower by



Opposite page: Neutral's animated rendering of Herzog & de Meuron's proposed Gazprom Tower in St. Petersburg, Russia. **This page, top:** An image of the "Manifold," a shapeless landscape in a virtual utopian world from Imaginary Forces' *New City* exhibit at MoMA's *Design and the Elastic Mind* exhibition in 2008. **Bottom:** A close-up view of a potential new cityscape, also from the *Elastic Mind* exhibit.



COURTESY IMAGINARY FORCES

Herzog & de Meuron gets cinematic in its display, showing columns and walls and ceilings falling down from the sky like an architectural Tetris game. As the building rises floor by floor, viewers venture into and around the residences, flying through living rooms and out over the 57-story building's staggered balconies. In two flashy minutes, viewers watch the building grow up and blend into the neighborhood.

Like Tronic Studio, architects, urban designers, and planners make up the majority of Neutral's staff. This experience in the design of buildings and spaces plays into their films' focus on the context of

the projects and how they fit into their urban surroundings. A recent film Neutral produced for a waterfront project in Copenhagen by OMA shows the building integrating with the city piece by piece, then shows it in its complete form from the perspective of a pedestrian touring its interior and exterior.

Snellman said he and his team are more interested in the presentation of architectural ideas than in actually designing. With a good display, he said, "You'll be able to understand where the idea comes from and why it needs to be the way it is."

A common frustration for Neutral, Tronic, and others working in

architectural animation is that context is regularly overlooked in most flythroughs commissioned by architects.

"A flythrough is as relevant to the view of something as a sketch on a napkin. No one ever sees anything from the perspective of a flythrough. Unless you're a drone," said Peter Frankfurt, co-founder of Imaginary Forces, a design studio with offices in Los Angeles and New York that produces film titles, commercials, interactive spaces, and a variety of visual elements and experiences.

Frankfurt and Imaginary Forces routinely work with architects, and were part of the multidisciplinary

consortium United Architects, whose pre-visualization film became one of six finalists in the competition to redesign the World Trade Center. Rather than focusing solely on the proposed design, the film imagines the complex already built and tracks the reactions of people as they see it for the first time, jutting out from the skyline and peeking through the forest of skyscrapers of Lower Manhattan. He says the common thread in all his firm's work—from the beginning of a Hollywood movie to a car commercial to an architectural visualization—is a solid and engaging narrative. "It's really about, how do you tell a

good story? That's basically the bottom line," said Frankfurt.

The bulk of Imaginary Forces' film work is of the Hollywood variety; they've done teasers and opening credits for films like *Minority Report*, *Terminator Salvation*, and the *Transformers* series. But elements of architecture have found their way into much of the firm's work, especially in the realm of experience design. One project for New York City's Museum of Modern Art was *New City*, an architecturally based immersive media environment that envisioned a "living virtual world parallel and simultaneous to ours." Frankfurt said this type of work helps to emphasize the connection between entertainment and architecture.

These sorts of thematic and impressionistic displays are much more than marketing presentations. Some architects are actually using animation as part of their design methods. "It becomes part of the creative thought process," said Kulapat Yantrasast, a principal at wHY Architecture in Culver City. "By doing the video, you learn how to communicate the idea more clearly, which sometimes refines the idea itself."

For one residential project in the Hollywood Hills, wHY took inspiration from the neighborhood's history in the film industry to create a sort of film-noir animation of the house's design. Taking cues from Alfred Hitchcock and the early days of mystery movies, wHY's film shows the house from the perspective of a private detective investigating a crime. The "investigation" takes the detective and the viewer up the drive to the home and through each of its rooms. The crime isn't exactly solved, but the narrative style turns what could have been a drab flythrough into an engaging exploration.

Frankfurt said the growing use of animation throughout the design and marketing process is a cross-pollination between architects and filmmakers that's likely to continue. "I think it's just architects' comfort level and fluency increasing," he said. "They're using the process of making the film as a kind of design charrette for elements of the project itself, and I think that's where there's real interesting push and value."

LA-BASED NATE BERG WRITES ABOUT ARCHITECTURE, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND TECHNOLOGY. HE IS AN EDITOR AT THE URBAN PLANNING NEWS WEBSITE PLANETIZEN.

The editors of *AN* pored over the architecture books of the season to bring you our definitive list of the most intriguing, compelling, seriously gorgeous, data-driven, cool, and fascinating books—in our opinion. Read on!

BOUNTIFUL BOOKS

FIRST WORKS: EMERGING ARCHITECTURAL EXPERIMENTATION OF THE 1960s & 1970s

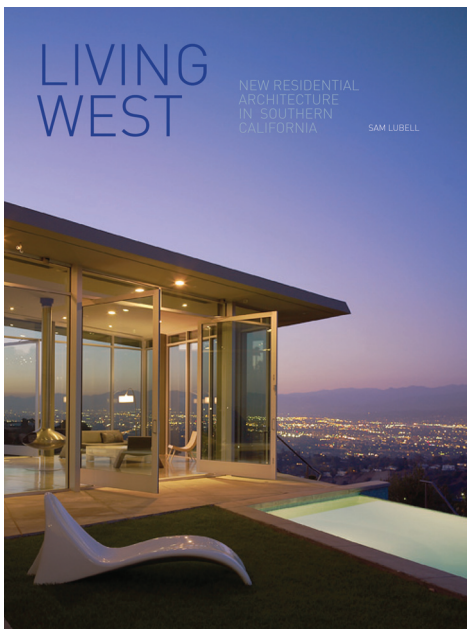
Edited by
Brett Steele and Francisco González de Canales

1960–1979 first works by: Robert Venturi, Michael Webb, Cedric Price, Alvaro Siza, Aldo Rossi, Norman Foster & Richard Rogers, Paul Virilio & Claude Parent, Rafael Moneo, Andrea Branzi, Renzo Piano, Peter Eisenman, Coop Himmelb(l)au, Toyo Ito, Rem Koolhaas & Elia Zenghelis, Morphosis, Bernard Tschumi, Steven Holl, Daniel Libeskind, Zaha Hadid, Herzog & de Meuron

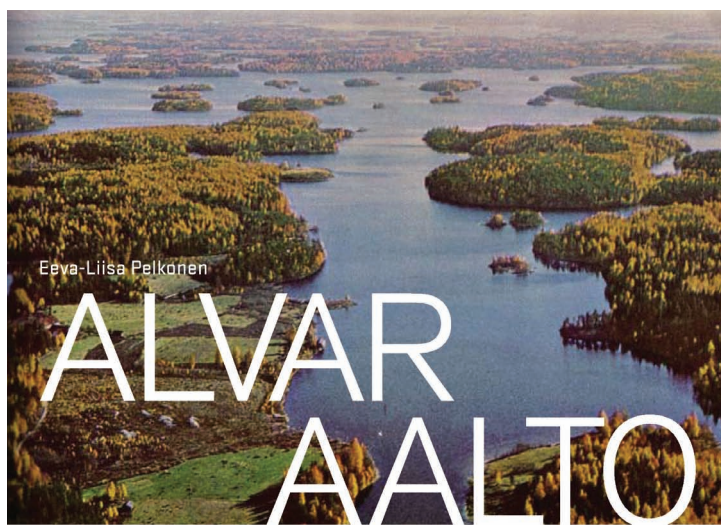
2009 commentaries by: Marina Lathouri, Kenneth Frampton, Samantha Hardingham, Manuel Aires Mateus, Pier Vittorio Aureli, Theodore Spyropoulos, François Roche, Luis M Mansilla & Emilio Tuñón, Kazys Varnelis, Stefano Boeri, Robert E Somol, Beatriz Colomina, Terunobu Fujimori, Alejandro Zaera-Polo with Francisco González de Canales & Nuria Alvarez Lombardero, Sylvia Lavin, Enrique Walker, David Leatherbarrow, Jesse Reiser, Patrik Schumacher, Oliver Domeisen

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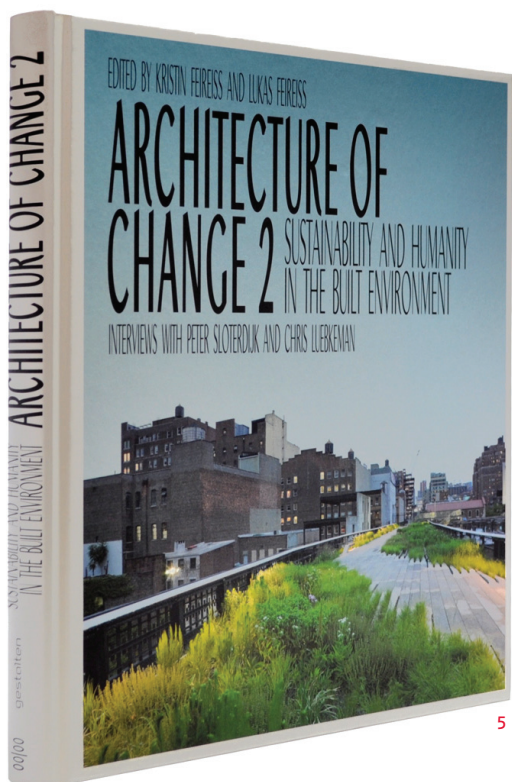


GIO PONTI

Ugo la Pietra



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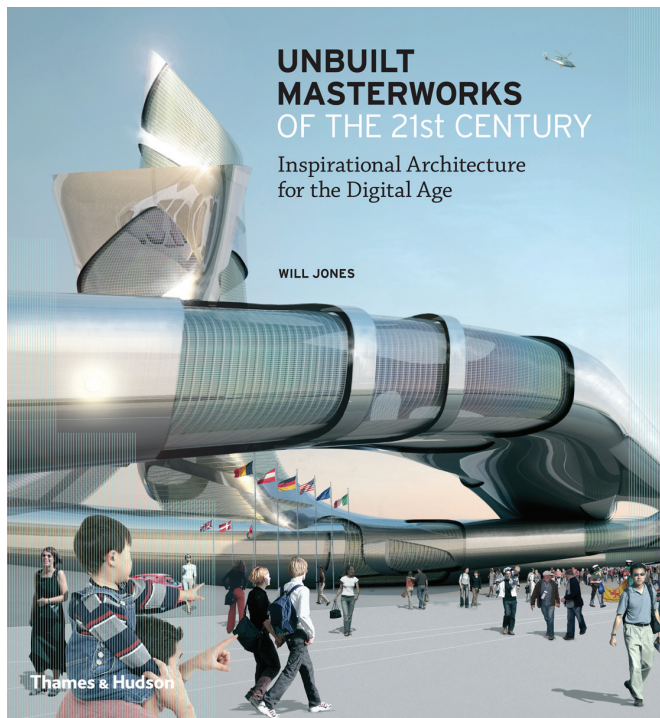


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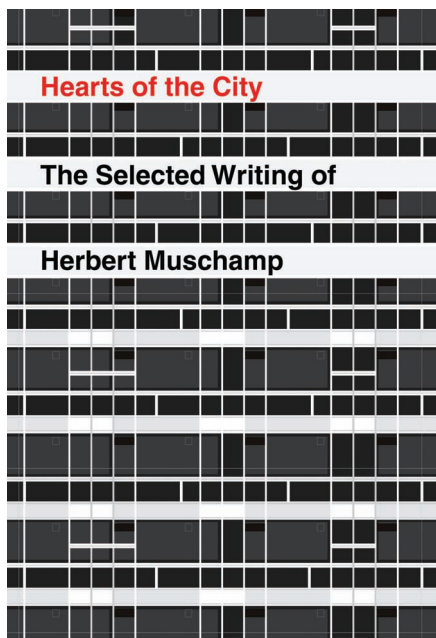
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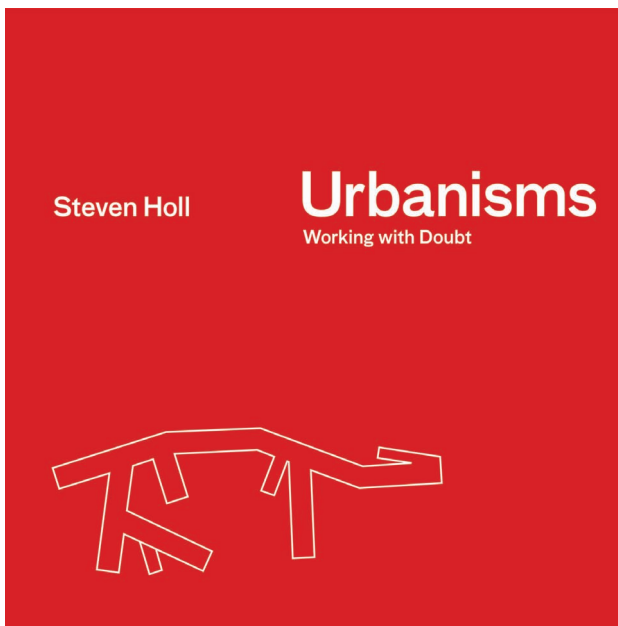
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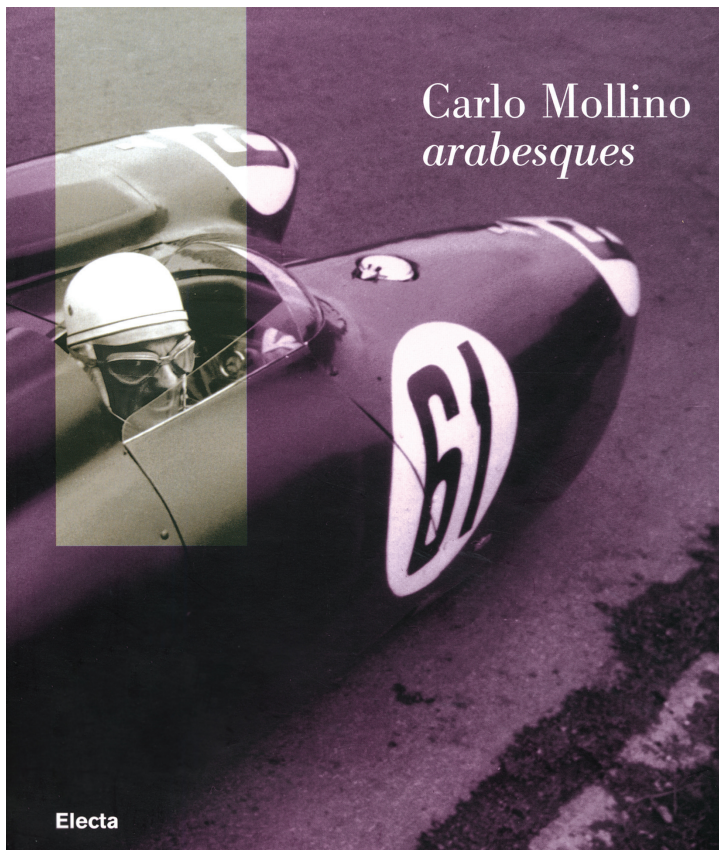
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- LIVING WEST: NEW ARCHITECTURE IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**
Sam Lubell
The Monacelli Press
\$50.00
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Rizzoli
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Herbert Muschamp
Knopf
\$50.00
Selected works. Don't miss the memoir at the end.
- URBANISMS: WORKING WITH DOUBT**
Steven Holl
Princeton Architectural Press
\$55.00
Holl's *cri de coeur* disguised as a monograph—or is it the other way around?
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Ila Berman and Mona El Kafif
William Stout
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A double-sided look—literally—at the research and results of Tulane's rebuilding efforts in New Orleans.

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DECEMBER

THURSDAY 17
LECTURE
Dominic Willsdon
Kerry James Marshall's
Souvenir III
6:30 p.m.
San Francisco Museum of
Modern Art
151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

EVENT
Art After Hours
5:00 p.m.
Monterey Museum of Art
558 Pacific St., Monterey
www.montereyart.org

FRIDAY 18
EVENT
A Bus Tour of the Urban
Oilscape of Los Angeles
9:00 a.m.
Center for Land Use
Interpretation
9331 Venice Blvd.
Culver City
www.clui.org

SATURDAY 19
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
The Gold of Troy:
Ancient Jewelry from the
Penn Museum Collection
The Bowers Museum
2002 North Main St.
Santa Ana
www.bowers.org

The Anniversary Show
San Francisco Museum of
Modern Art
151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

THURSDAY 24
EVENT
Demonstration: Rembrandt's
Materials and Techniques
11:00 a.m.
The J. Paul Getty Center
1200 Getty Center Dr.
Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

SATURDAY 26
WITH THE KIDS
Union Station Family Tour
11:00 a.m.
Union Station
800 North Alameda St.
Los Angeles
www.laconservancy.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Where Masks Still Dance:
New Guinea
The Bowers Museum
2002 North Main St.
Santa Ana
www.bowers.org

SUNDAY 27
WITH THE KIDS
Family Playhouse! Lion Mask
1:00 p.m.
Autry National Center of
the American West
4700 Western Heritage Way
Los Angeles
www.autrynationalcenter.org

JANUARY

SATURDAY 2
LECTURE
Steve Grody
2:00 p.m.
Pacific Asia Museum
46 North Los Robles Ave.
Pasadena
www.pacificasiamuseum.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Alison Foshee
Leslie Kneisel
Jancar Gallery
961 Chung King Rd.
Los Angeles
www.jancargallery.com

SUNDAY 3
WITH THE KIDS
Oshogatsu Family Festival
11:00 a.m.
Japanese American
National Museum
369 East 1st St., Los Angeles
www.janm.org

TUESDAY 5
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Ken Murphy
A History of the Sky
The Exploratorium
3601 Lyon St., San Francisco
www.exploratorium.edu

Tom Bolles
Back to Basics
Braunstein/Quay Gallery
430 Clementina, San Francisco
www.bquayartgallery.com

WEDNESDAY 6
EVENT
Architectural Heritage Tour
9:30 a.m.
Balboa Park Visitors Center
1549 El Prado, San Diego
www.balboapark.org

SATURDAY 9
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Shay Bredimus
New Drawings
Koplin Del Rio Gallery
6031 Washington Blvd.
Culver City
www.kopлиндelrio.com

Michele O'Marah
Kathryn Brennan Gallery
955 Chung King Rd.
Los Angeles
www.kathrynbrennan.com

Jorge Marin
Volador
Couturier Gallery
166 North La Brea Ave.
www.couturiergallery.com

Anima: The Photography of
Jean-Francoise Spricigo
Louis Stern Fine Arts
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Robert Linsley,
Michael Murphy,
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www.acmelosangeles.com

Menfred Menz
Invisible Asia
AndrewShire Gallery
3850 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.andrewshiregallery.com

SUNDAY 10
EXHIBITION OPENING
Nick Cave
Meet Me at the
Center of the Earth
Fowler Museum of Art
308 Charles East Young Dr.
Los Angeles
www.fowler.ucla.edu

WEDNESDAY 13
LECTURE
Rick Lowe
7:00 p.m.
Otis College of
Art and Design
Ahmanson Hall
9045 Lincoln Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.otis.edu

THURSDAY 14
LECTURE
Christopher Knight
Criticism, Journalism,
and Looking @Art
7:00 p.m.
Santa Monica College
1310 11th St., Santa Monica
www.otis.edu

FRIDAY 15
EXHIBITION OPENING
Aaron Young
The Right Way to Do Wrong
Gagosian Gallery
456 North Camden Dr.,
Beverly Hills
www.gagosian.com

SATURDAY 16
LECTURE
Collecting with Mr. Getty
4:30 p.m.
The J. Paul Getty Villa
17985 Pacific Coast Hwy.
Pacific Palisades
www.getty.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Long Play:
Bruce Conner and
the Singles Collection
The View from Here
Ewan Gibbs
San Francisco Museum of
Modern Art
151 3rd St.
San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

Lee Ufan
Blum & Poe
2727 South La Cienega Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.blumandpoe.com

Gustavo Godoy
Honor Fraser
2622 South La Cienega Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.honorfraser.com

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Mauro Soggiu
Lincart
1 Otis St., San Francisco
www.lincart.com

Ssion
Boy
Peres Projects
2766 South La Cienega Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.peresprojects.com

SUNDAY 17
EXHIBITION OPENING
Rauschenberg at Gemini
Armory Center for the Arts
145 North Raymond Ave.
Pasadena
www.armoryarts.org

EVENT
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Celebration
11:00 a.m.
California African American
Museum
600 State Dr.
Los Angeles
www.caam.ca.gov

WITH THE KIDS
Kids in the Courtyard: Make
Some Noise
1:00 p.m.
Fowler Museum of Art
308 Charles East Young Dr.
Los Angeles
www.fowler.ucla.edu

WEDNESDAY 20
LECTURE
Tom Gunning and
Thomas Demand
7:00 p.m.
Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
hammer.ucla.edu

FRIDAY 22
LECTURE
J. Eric Lynxwiler
12:00 p.m.
Farmlab
1745 North Spring St.
Los Angeles
www.farmlab.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Rembrandt's Recession:
Passion and Prints in the
Dutch Golden Age
Timken Museum of Art
1500 El Prado, Balboa Park
San Diego
www.timkenmuseum.org

SATURDAY 23
LECTURE
Tom Carruth
Roses and the Arts &
Crafts Movement
12:00 p.m.
Art Center College of Design
1700 Lida St., Pasadena
www.gamblehouse.org

EVENT
House on the Horizon
1:00 p.m.
California African American
Museum
600 State Dr., Los Angeles
www.caam.ca.gov

SUNDAY 24
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Ahmet Ogut
Exploded City/ MATRIX 231
Berkeley Art Museum &
Pacific Film Archive
2625 Durant Ave., Berkeley
www.bampfa.berkeley.edu

Bold Abstractions: Textiles
from Central Asia & Iran
The Fool's Journey: The
History and Symbolism of
the Tarot
Craft and Folk Art Museum
5814 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.cafam.org

EVENT
Downtown Renaissance Tour:
Spring + Main
10:00 a.m.
400 South Main St.
Los Angeles
www.laconservancy.org

TUESDAY 26
LECTURE
Becky Nicolaides
Exploring Social and Civil
Transformations in Suburban
Los Angeles Since 1945
7:00 p.m.
Autry National Center
Griffith Park Campus
4700 Western Heritage Way
Los Angeles
www.autrynationalcenter.org



COURTESY THE ARTIST AND MARY GOLDMAN

ROB FISCHER
The Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles
Through April 1, 2010

Brooklyn-based artist Rob Fischer scavenges debris from abandoned buildings and junkyards to create the imposing sculptures that make up his new exhibit at the Hammer Museum. The show's main element is a ribbon of recycled wooden floorboards that used to line the gymnasium of a school in Fischer's native Minnesota. Sometimes wider, sometimes thinner, it winds its way around the room, creating nooks that house other artworks, and occasionally climbs the gallery walls. A roll-off Dumpster becomes the cheeky *I Bet You Think This Song is About You* (2005), towering a rusty 22 feet high and inviting visitors to wander through its mirrored innards. *30 Yards (Minor Tragedies Dissected)* (2005) turns a motley assortment of discarded pipes, glass, a rowboat, pickup truck bed, chairs, and air-plane wreckage into a deadpan monument to society's offal. Fischer's fascination with debris translates effectively into two-dimensional media as well: His *Unity Road* photographs (2004–5, above) capture a mobile home sitting abandoned in a field overgrown with weeds. From the trailer billows a plume of yellow-orange flame and smoke that Fischer has added to the scene with acrylic paint, turning an already eerie image into a fevered dream.



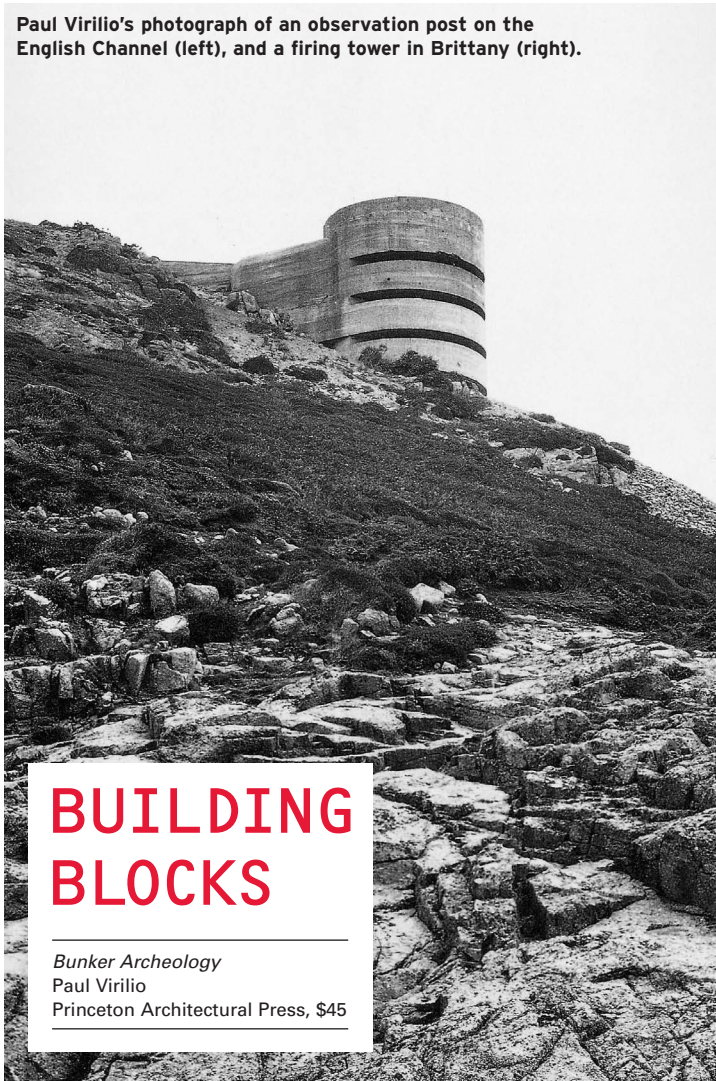
COURTESY MAK CENTER

OTTO NEURATH:
GYPSY URBANISM
MAK Center for Art and Architecture
835 North Kings Road, West Hollywood
Through January 31, 2010

"The modern advertisement will show us the way!" So spoke Otto Neurath (1882–1945), an Austrian scholar who recognized the power in the graphic vocabulary of popular culture and pressed it into the service of social change. Neurath is well known for his contributions to the philosophy of science, but it is his more obscure sociological work that is the focus of *Gypsy Urbanism*, guest-curated by architectural historian and theorist Nader Vossoughian. With a collection of ephemera from 1920s Vienna, the exhibit demonstrates how Neurath's ideas were informed by contemporaries such as Le Corbusier and Moholy-Nagy; and by an influx of "gypsy" settlers after the collapse of the Habsburgs, which sparked a national conversation about housing reform. Believing that information was the key to fostering an active democracy, Neurath invented what he hoped would become a universal graphic language. He employed it in his own Museum of Society and Economy, which the MAK has partially re-created: a portable set of exhibits that used charts and maps to explain topics ranging from insurance statistics to land use, as in *Population Density in the Metropolis* (1930, above). *Gypsy Urbanism* highlights the ripple effects Neurath's work had on fields as wide-ranging as economics and graphic design, and shines a spotlight on a fascinating life.

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER DECEMBER 16, 2009

Paul Virilio's photograph of an observation post on the English Channel (left), and a firing tower in Brittany (right).



BUILDING BLOCKS

Bunker Archeology
Paul Virilio
Princeton Architectural Press, \$45



COURTESY PAP

In *Bunker Archeology*, Paul Virilio investigates the territorial impact of some 15,000 Nazi bunkers built along 2,796 miles of French coastline during World War II. The study looks at the implementation of the *blockhaus*, originally intended to defend against an Allied invasion by establishing what Hitler referred to as the "Atlantic Wall." This seminal work, written in 1958 but not published until 1975 (and only in English in 1994), proved influential in developing Virilio's early speculations on military tactics, geopolitics, and transport velocity, as well as on the aesthetics of the monolith and the aesthetics of disappearance.

In an interview with scholar John Armitage that appeared in the internet review Ctheory.net in 2000, Virilio explained his motivations for writing *Bunker Archeology*:

"...At the time that I did the research for that book, I was very young. My aim was to understand the notion of 'Total War'... I was among the first people to experience the German Occupation of France during the Second World War. I was seven to 13 years old during the war and... we in Nantes were denied access to the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. It was therefore not until after the war was over that I saw the sea for the first time, in the vicinity of St. Nazaire. It was there that I discovered the bunkers. But what I also discovered was that during the war, the whole

GRAFT's Shotgun House for Make It Right.



VIRGINIA MILLER

Brad Pitt Writes, Too?

Architecture in Times of Need
Edited by Kristin Feireiss
with text by Brad Pitt
Prestel, \$39.95

Make It Right, Brad Pitt's initiative to bring sustainable architecture to a devastated New Orleans neighborhood, may be seen as the latest in a long series of utopian communities. Most of those visionary schemes remained on paper; others expired with the charismatic leader who created them. Make It

Right has a much better chance of success because it's a collaborative venture in which architects work closely with residents and allow them to choose what they want to build. Pitt has leveraged his fame to build support, win trust, and expedite construction. The handsome

Architecture in Times of Need documents the project, from the storm to the realization of the first houses. As Pitt notes, the scheme was born of outrage, but it evolved pragmatically. "Katrina was man-made," not a natural disaster, he writes. "Decades of reckless handling of the levees com-

bined with a negligent lack of political effort...this is an issue of social justice, and a responsibility exists to right this wrong."

The actor moved his family to New Orleans and worked hands-on with residents of the Lower Ninth Ward, the hardest-hit district in the city. The ward occupies a low-lying area that might succumb to another flood, and some argued that it should be abandoned, but most residents were property owners and they were determined to return. Inspired by the Global Green competition in another ward, Pitt brought in GRAFT, an architectural firm with offices in LA, Berlin, and Beijing. The partners developed a plan for 150 houses clustered on a few streets to create a critical mass, seeing this as a prototype for other disaster-related schemes. "The potency of the idea resides in its vast potential as a problem-solving model which can be utilized globally," they write.

GRAFT joined with William McDonough + Partners, pioneers in sustainable design, to select a team of architects to design

model houses that would provide sustainable, storm-resistant shelter. Fourteen firms responded to the call to study local typologies, provide high design at low cost, and forgo their fees. Morphosis developed a house that would float, buoyed by a polystyrene foam and a fiber-reinforced concrete base tethered to steel posts. New Orleans architects participated alongside such international stars as MVRDV, Shigeru Ban, and David Adjaye. Each worked closely with representatives of the community, and eligible residents chose which model to build. The Make It Right Foundation assists those who are unable to secure a loan to cover the \$150,000 purchase price, drawing on the \$32 million it has raised.

In a second phase, seven more architects were recruited. Gehry Partners, which is currently reconstructing its storm-battered Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art on the coast of Mississippi, designed an ambitious double house, as did Atelier Hitoshi Abe. Pugh + Scarpa, MVRDV, and GRAFT, who participated in the first phase, each created **continued on page 19**

of Europe had become a fortress. And thus I saw to what extent an immense territory, a whole continent, had effectively been reorganized into one city, and just like the cities of old. From that moment on, I became more interested in urban matters, in logistics, in the organization of transport, in maintenance and supplies."

In the United States, Virilio is always introduced as an urbanist, a political theorist, and a postmodern critic. Too often overlooked are his roles as an architect, a professor emeritus of architecture, and the former director of the École Spéciale d'Architecture de Paris—the dissident school created by Viollet-le-Duc in opposition to the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

When considering Virilio's diverse areas of expertise, it is not surprising that *Bunker Archeology* has had an important influence on French architectural discourse. At the time of the book's first publication, Brutalism had been a leading architectural trend since the 1950s. The use of "raw concrete" (the Corbusian appellation for board-marked poured concrete) in the production of unadorned cubic form was seen as the ultimate limit of representation. In this context Virilio assessed the historical precedence of the *blockhaus* in relation to the aesthetic of Brutalism: "Why continue to be surprised at Le

Corbusier's forms of the modern architecture? Why speak of 'brutalism'? And, above all, why this ordinary habitat, so very ordinary over so many years?" In some ways, the bunker model became a modern version of the "primitive hut," a primal object used to fetishize and ultimately transgress its wartime meaning. Unlike Lyotard's or Baudrillard's postmodernism, Virilio's view does not diverge from modernism and modernity, but is rather a tragic view of the consequences of its technical world.

Bunker Archeology redefines the *blockhaus* within the cultural context of modern architecture, providing an iconic model for French design culture that represents both its extremes and limits. Its metaphor becomes the means to conceptually objectify architecture to a minimalist end, allowing the architect to play on the theme of the monolith and its aftermath, the fractal. Virilio's study was followed by his creation with Claude Parent of the review *Architecture Principe* (1963) and of the concept of the "function oblique," as well as the realization of the church Sainte-Bernadette-du-Banlay in Nevers (1966). An exhibition bearing the French title of the book, *Bunker Archéologie*, was co-organized at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in 1975, followed by another of his

photographs documenting French bunkers at the Pompidou Center the same year. This recognition culminated at the Venice Biennale in 1996 with the book *Bloc, le Monolith Fracturé*, Frédéric Migayrou's historical assessment of a post-World War II formal aesthetics initiated by Virilio, Parent, and the too-often-forgotten André Bloc, whose role was critical. This book presents the legacy of Virilio's influence through the work of Jean Nouvel, who worked for Parent, and of others, such as Bernard Tschumi, Odile Decq, Benoît Cornette, and Roche DSV & Cie. The Biennale bore witness to the formal achievement of more recent architectural works, including three by Nouvel: the Theater of Tokyo (1987) in collaboration with Philippe Starck, the Opera of Lyon (1993), and the Palais des Congrès in Tours (1993). Decq's design for the FRAC Collection in Rennes in 2005 represented the ultimate expression of the historical evolution of French design culture since *Bunker Archeology* and its monolithic expression. It is unfortunate that the publisher missed the opportunity in the book's reprinting to include an introduction stressing the impact on French architecture that the book has had for more than 30 years.

Now relegated to the recent history of postmodern thought,

Virilio's interpretations have lost their intellectual intrigue with time. The most interesting portions of the book remain Virilio's poetic discovery of the seashore, the remapping of World War II, a chapter on Albert Speer, and some of his brilliant remarks that punctuate the text. Most intriguing are excerpts from Hitler's letters envisioning the creation of the Atlantic Wall, which give insight into the master architect of World War II. These elements confirm the historical value of *Bunker Archeology* and its important contribution to history, theory, and modern architecture.

PHILIPPE BARRIÈRE, A HISTORIAN AND CRITIC, IS THE PRINCIPAL OF PHILIPPE BARRIÈRE COLLECTIVE.



BRAD PITT WRITES, TOO?

continued from page 18 a second design. A score of houses have been completed and the feedback from residents has been mostly positive. The entire project should be complete by the end of the year.

The LA office of GRAFT produced this 490-page book, which is organized chronologically in chapters that document the storm, the community, and the concept and realization of Make It Right, along with analyses of the 26 selected designs. Texts and photo essays alternate with sketches, plans, and construction photos. The concluding sections explain how the project was organized and financed.

The book inspires many emotions: anger at the failure of government agencies and institutions, exhilaration at the rapid response of dedicated individuals, and wonder that so much has been accomplished in a couple of years. If Make It Right realizes its potential and inspires others to aim high, then it will fulfill the modernist dream that architecture can transform society. Too bad it takes a tragedy like Katrina to spur such a project.

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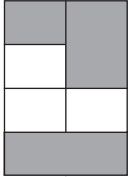
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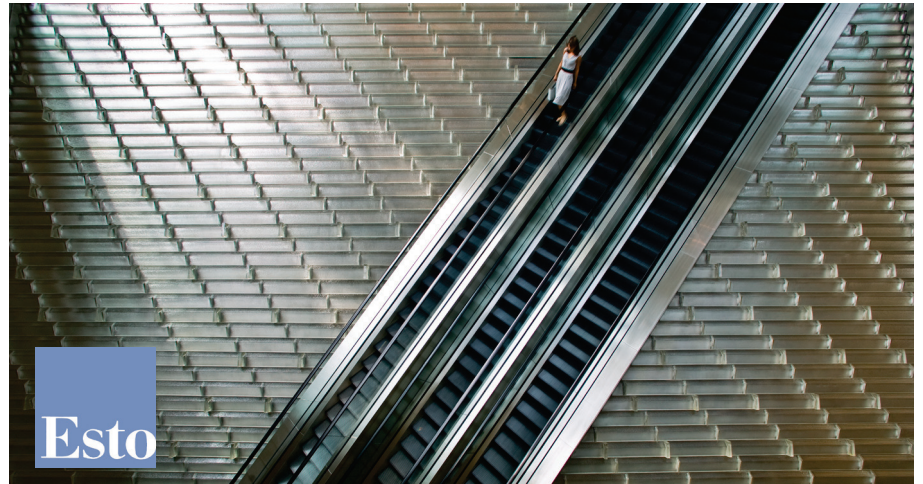
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Ice Falls by James Carpenter, Hearst Building from *Public Art New York* by Jean Parker Phifer

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We want to hear from you about buildings and sources we should consider. Submit suggestions by December 31 to editor@archpaper.com.

We'll be sharing all your favorites in our first issue of 2010!



The advertisement features a large, curved glass panel in a modern interior setting. A red icon of a person fighting a fire is in the top right corner. The text 'Pilkington Pyrostop® Fire Resistance Glass' is prominently displayed. Below it, 'Product Features' are listed, including human impact safety, classification by Underwriters Laboratories, and various product durations. Contact information for Technical Glass Products (TGP) is provided at the bottom left, and the Pilkington logo is at the bottom right.

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Contact Technical Glass Products (TGP)
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The advertisement features a wire suspension custom kitchen shelf with colorful cups and glasses. The Standoff Systems logo is in the top left. The text 'BRING YOUR DESIGNS TO LIFE™' is in the top right. Below it, 'Request our New Catalog Visit our New Website' is written. The product name 'Wire Suspension Custom Kitchen Shelf' is in the center. Contact information is at the bottom left, and the logo and 'MADE IN USA' tag are at the bottom right.

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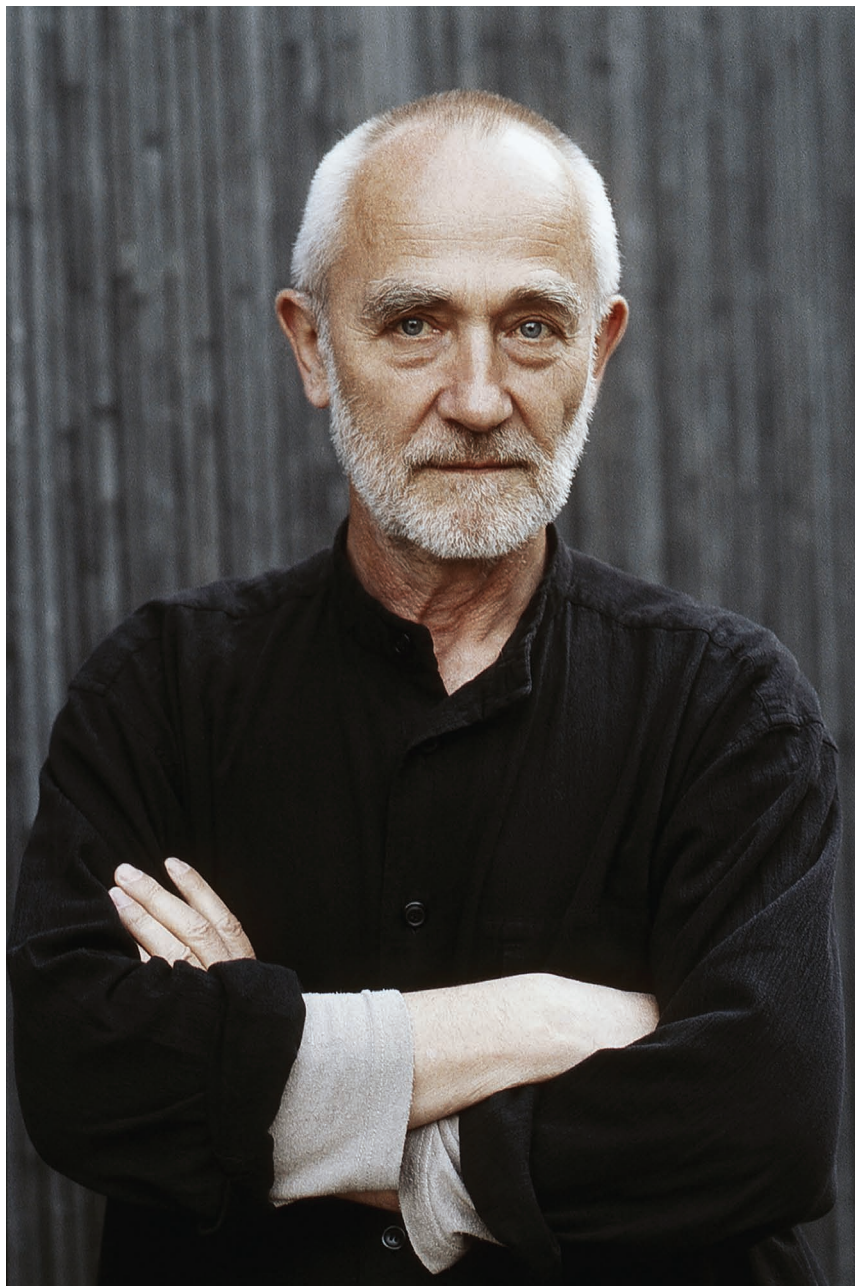


The advertisement features a large red circle with the text 'PRODUCT FINDER' inside. To the right, a paragraph explains how to use the product finder. Below this, a table lists companies and their corresponding RS numbers.

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To learn more about products and services advertised in **The Architect's Newspaper**, just note the advertiser's number and log on to www.archpaper.com. Click on our **Red Dot Product Finder**, and you can easily search by number to get free information about the latest products, design professionals, business services, and more.

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GARY EBNER

A Bolt of Zumthor

Peter Zumthor is cooking up something big for Los Angeles. The Swiss architect, winner of this year's Pritzker Prize and designer of well-received art museums in Switzerland, Austria, and Germany, has been visiting LA this year to look at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. LACMA's seven buildings—mainly from the 1960s and '80s—are spread disjointedly over 20 acres, and the museum has sought a more distinguished home for years even as it has expanded toward Wilshire Boulevard.

Three years ago Michael Govan, when he became LACMA's CEO and director, said this creative, forward-looking city is the only one in the world today with the chance to redo its major museum. Govan's plan to tell new stories of the histories and meaning of art would be bolstered by new architecture. To that end, Govan has been working with many talented architects, including Culver City-based SPF:a and Renzo Piano, but none are more idiosyncratic than the man from Haldenstein, Switzerland: Peter Zumthor. On a recent trip to LA, Edward Lifson sat down to interview the often reclusive-seeming architect. Lifson followed up with an interview with Michael

Govan and found, to his surprise, that just when it felt like visions for major cultural projects across America were on hold, there are still some very ambitious long-term plans in the works.

Edward Lifson: You only accept commissions that deeply interest you. Why accept the transformation of LACMA?

Peter Zumthor: Well, I knew Michael [Govan] from New York, from the Dia Foundation. We tried to do a project there for the artist Walter de Maria. After Michael took over in LA, he called me and said, "Look at this collection! We have to start to think about a new building for this." I started last April. With a large team from LACMA, we're thinking about this campus and about what a new building for the entire collection could be like.

The entire collection!

It probably won't be a sequence of period galleries with a long corridor. We're talking about rebuilding the whole east part of this campus, from the two new Renzo Piano buildings all the way over to the tar pits.

The prehistoric La Brea tar pits next to

LACMA. For your baths at Vals in Switzerland, you used the local primordial stone. What will the materials be here? Will we see tar in this project?

[Laughing] I don't know yet what the materials would be. Well, since the museum has a beautiful collection with nice anchor pieces of pre-Columbian art, there is a proximity to the old history of the continent, and it would be nice to integrate the proximity of the tar pits into the new project. But we're designing from the inside out, that's the most important thing. The personality and the character of the collection is what's interesting. You know, every collection has a different personality. We want to bring out the character of this one. We'll identify five or six anchor pieces of art for the building. Pre-Columbian and Indian art are very strong here, and of course, one anchor in this place, Los Angeles, will be cinema. Around the anchor pieces we'll leave space for interesting juxtapositions with other art—more of the same or completely different art—which somehow has to do with it.

There will also be space for atmospheres. We're talking about building into the architecture a critical thread. A dark space. A line going through the museum in which you can make critical commentaries on the art by using photography, film, drawing, etc. So a complex cellular idea starts to develop in my mind—and I have no damn idea of what this will be architecturally! I know about the "architectural tissue" for the building, but I have no idea how this could be done in real architecture.

Michael knows I need two to three years to come up with the solutions, and this is a ten-year project. But when he approaches funders they'll want to see drawings in half a year at the latest. So we're starting now so that when he's ready to go to funders, we'll be prepared.

Also, we should think about conservation and storage and all that, and of course those people should get a presence in the building. And then Michael says things like, "It has to appeal to children! It would be a great thing if a million children came to visit, maybe two million!" Nobody in Europe would ever talk about that.

I think a very interesting part will be the early American art, colonial art—it's filled with lies. So we'll have to introduce contemporary art, such as film and so on to comment on it, because the whole thing has to be true. And I think I would like to talk about when American art became a part of the world in the 1960s in a big way, and many of these artists were Californians. So it's fascinating and exciting. In the end, it could have intellectual and emotional parts—to make relationships across different kinds of art.

Endless cross-relationships, like Los Angeles itself. How will you connect with the city architecturally?

The way the current buildings hardly relate to Wilshire Boulevard, this kind of contrast, I think, is very American. I'm not fighting it at the moment, I'm just absorbing it. But we would maybe try to offer something not so well-known in Los Angeles, which is public space. With open-air cinema and so on, we'd like to make the whole place open to the people. Michael and I have the feeling that all of

Los Angeles is waiting for some real public space.

When you look around the existing museum campus of LACMA for inspiration, what do you see?

Typical American themes, you know, everybody has made a piece, not looking left and right: "I do this, I do that, and tomorrow I do this and then I do this." As a European, I'm trained more to say, "Maybe, could we maybe do a *whole* of the place? Maybe more than a collection of singularities?" I take pleasure in that, and we laugh a lot. I'm sorry to say, but today what they have here are strange buildings that clog up any public spaces. It's a little bit of a mess now on this site, so we're trying to think, how could we get rid of this?

Your project will involve demolition of existing LACMA buildings?

Yes.

Others have tried to redesign this campus and failed, notably Rem Koolhaas. How will you avoid failure?

I can't answer that.

It's one thing for you to build in Switzerland, Austria, or Germany, but here you are in Los Angeles, which is so different!

Maybe I'm too naive. I'm always like a little boy, getting excited. I look at this project and I get excited, I think I can do it. I'm aware you have to learn, but it's not so different from Switzerland or Norway. It's a small world. I was here in the '80s teaching at SCI-Arc, and to my surprise I got to like LA. It felt good. The city didn't give me the feeling, "You don't understand me, go home!" And so I've come back. When Michael called me I had the same feeling: I can work there.

What, specific to Los Angeles, are you drawing on for inspiration for this project?

I'm coming now from the snow and the cold in Switzerland, so this eternal good climate. Here it's light and serene, and lush vegetation. Yesterday, we went to the Huntington Gardens; it's incredible. I've been looking at the John Lautner houses and Frank Lloyd Wright houses, all that. For me it's something easy, something I like. There are formal aspects of life here, but they are maybe not as stiff as in other areas of the world. Los Angeles has a steady pace and flow.

WRITER, CRITIC, AND LOEB FELLOW EDWARD LIFSON BLOGS ABOUT ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN AT HELLO BEAUTIFUL! FOR ADDITIONAL CONVERSATION WITH LACMA DIRECTOR MICHAEL GOVAN, GO TO ARCHPAPER.COM/ZUMTHOR.



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